

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A computer-implemented method of testing an operational integrated software system, said system comprising a plurality of software elements, said method comprising the steps of:
  - a) automatically registering each active element of said plurality of software elements in a registry, said registry comprising a plurality of registered software elements, each element of which is associated with a set of test criteria;
  - b) associating a set of test criteria with each registered active element of software;
  - c) selecting an active element registered in the registry and testing the active element in accordance with the associated set of test criteria; and
  - d) capturing the results of the testing of the active element and comparing them to the associated test criteria.
2. (currently amended) A The computer-implemented method according to Claim 1 in which each element of software is arranged to automatically register an identification of itself in the registry.
3. (currently amended) A The computer-implemented method according to Claim 1 in which each element of software is arranged to capture the results of its testing.

4. (currently amended) A The computer-implemented method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of automatically providing a report on the results of the testing.

5. (currently amended) A The computer-implemented method according to claim 1 in which the test criteria are defined using a scripting language and said method further comprises the step of parsing the test criteria to convert them into a form for testing against.

6. (currently amended) A computer-based apparatus for testing an operational integrated software system, said system comprising a plurality of software elements, said apparatus comprising:

- a) computer-implemented means for the automatic registration of each active element of said plurality of software elements;
- b) computer-implemented means for associating a set of test criteria with each registered active element of software;
- c) computer-implemented means for selecting a registered active element of software and testing the active element in accordance with the associated test criteria; and
- d) computer-implemented means for comparing the results of the testing of the active element against the associated test criteria.

7. (currently amended) ~~An~~ The computer-based apparatus according to Claim 6 in which each element of software is provided with computer-implemented means for automatically registering itself.

8. (currently amended) ~~An~~ The computer-based apparatus according to Claim 6 in which each element of software is provided with computer-implemented means for capturing the results of its testing.

9. (currently amended) ~~An~~ The computer-based apparatus according to Claim 6 further comprising computer-implemented means for producing a report of the results of testing an element of software.

10. (currently amended) ~~An~~ The computer-based apparatus according to Claim 6 in which the test criteria are defined using a scripting language and the apparatus further comprises computer-implemented means for parsing the test criteria to convert them into a form for testing against.

11. (previously presented) A computer readable data carrier loadable into a computer and tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the computer for causing the computer to carry out appropriate steps to implement a method of testing an operational integrated software system having a plurality of software elements, said method comprising steps of:

- a) automatically registering each active element of said plurality of software elements in a registry;
- b) associating a set of test criteria with each registered active element of software;
- c) selecting an active element for testing from said active elements registered in the registry and testing the active element in accordance with the associated set of test criteria; and
- d) capturing the results of the testing of the active element and comparing them to the associated test criteria.

12. (previously presented) A computer readable data carrier loadable into a computer and tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the computer for enabling the computer to provide an apparatus for testing an operational integrated software system having a plurality of software elements, said apparatus comprising:

- a) means for the automatic registration of each active element of said plurality of software elements;
- b) means for associating a set of test criteria with each registered active element of software;
- c) means for selecting a registered active element of software and testing the active element in accordance with the associated test criteria; and
- d) means for comparing the results of the testing of the active element against the associated test criteria.

13. (previously presented) A computer program product for testing an operational software system having a plurality of software elements, said computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having a computer readable code means embodied in said medium for causing testing of the operation software system, the computer program product having:

computer readable code means for causing the computer to automatically register each active element of the plurality of software elements;

computer readable code means for causing the computer to associate a set of test criteria with each registered active element of software;

computer readable code means for causing the computer to select a registered active element of software and test the active element in accordance with the associated test criteria; and

computer readable code means for causing the computer to compare the results of the testing of the active element against the associated test criteria.